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**ADDRESS AT THE DEDICATION OF THE CENTEN-  
NIAL TABLET PLACED IN THE MEMORIAL HALL,  
CAPITOL BUILDING, FEBRUARY 22, 1919, TO THE  
ILLINOIS SOLDIERS AND SAILORS IN THE WAR  
OF THE REBELLION, 1861-1865.**

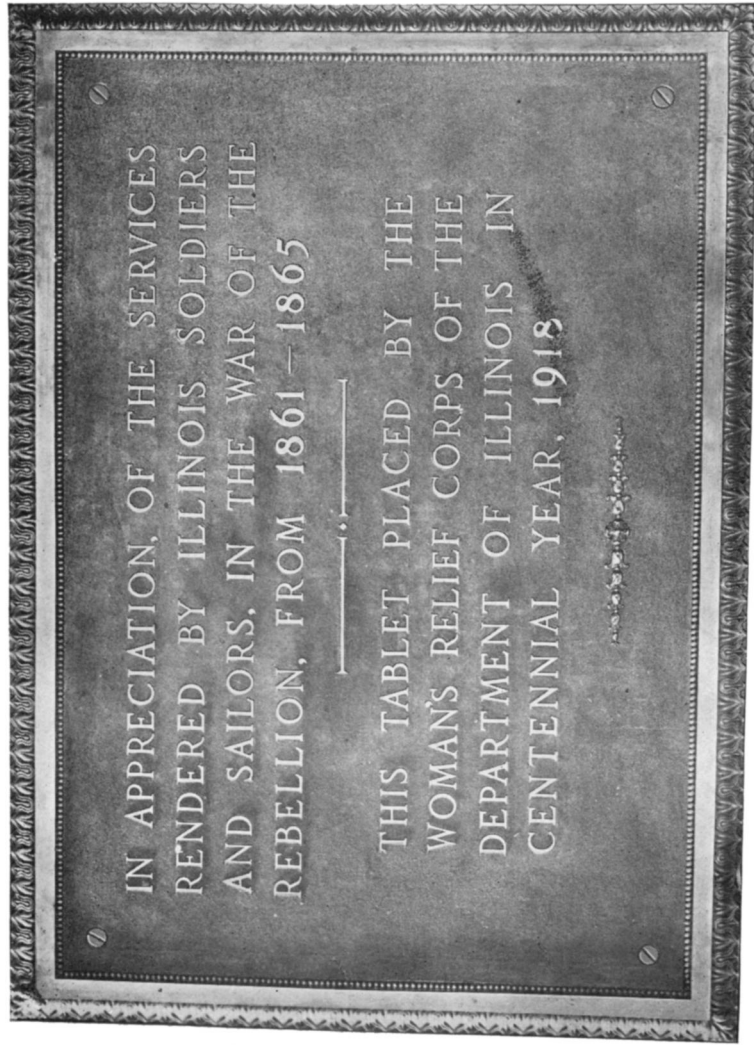
BY MRS. FLO JAMISON MILLER.

It is with due appreciation of the honor bestowed upon me and with some fear and trembling as to the responsibility which it carries, that I appear before you, and in the name of the twelve thousand loyal members of the Woman's Relief Corps tender their appreciation in lasting bronze for the services of the Soldiers and Sailors in the "War of the Rebellion."

While the number of sailors from Illinois in comparison with the number of soldiers engaged, was small, still their services under Foote, and Farragut on the waters of the Mississippi, Ohio, Tennessee, Cumberland and elsewhere was an important part in the great plan, and those who participated did their share in bringing forth final success.

It is fitting that this meeting should be held today, because it is the one hundred and ninety-seventh anniversary of the birth of the First Commander-in-Chief of the American Army, General Washington, from whom we learned the principles of the nation. Through whose efforts the Declaration of Independence and the everlasting Constitution of the United States became the greatest documents ever devised by men.

The war for American Independence under General Washington and his Continental Soldiers, 309,871 in number cost the country many lives, and \$125,000,000 in money, but the country was worth it all because it made the United States of America free and independent.



Centennial Tablet to the Illinois Soldiers and Sailors in the War of the Rebellion 1861-1865.

Again it is most fitting that this occasion should have been placed in the month of February, for in this month occurs the anniversary of the birth of that great American, Abraham Lincoln, who was Commander-in-chief of the army whose valor we commemorate today.

The War of the Rebellion called to the Colors 2,700,000 men. Their losses were 14 per cent of all the men engaged. The money cost was near \$7,000,000,000, but it was worth all that it cost, because it gave us a united country.

Since early ages it has been the custom when special honor and attention was to be shown a distinguished guest, by ruler, potentate or householder, to present the guest with trays of luscious fruit, fragrant flowers and costly gems. Today we bring to you our casket of gems and give you the priceless jewel of Memory. Poets have called it God's sweetest and best gift to man, the cord which binds the past to the present."

In the land of Memory, old age never exists. To those who have lived in the days of the sixties Memory brings to us forms invisible to others, who stand before us; lips long ago silenced speak to us. They come and with their "left, left, left" of other days, their tread light and echoless as footfalls of angels, their features clear and distinct. We see them standing on the picket lines in the silent watches of the night, perhaps grouped around the camp-fire in the evening dusk, or perhaps in the drawn-up line of the battle front; and while we who gather here have been touched by the finger of Time, these Memory children wear ever the impress of eternal youth and because Memory brings back these days of yore we are here to dedicate this tablet, a tribute to the services of the Soldiers from Illinois, who in the days when Rebellion ran riot, gave their best efforts, suffered hardships and many made the supreme sacrifice, to make the nation free.

We meet to honor the memory of the great men, who in the hour of her agony, our nation brought forth for her preservation. There is a peculiar fitness in commemorating the great deeds of Illinois soldiers, for the world today realizes that "not without thy wonderous story could be writ the nation's glory, Illinois."

We would indeed be unworthy did we not feel profound gratitude toward these men, who when their country called in her dire need, sprang forward and answered the call. These men offered their lives a willing sacrifice in defense of their country. They placed their bodies as a living wall between the union and those who sought to destroy it, their valor shines forth from every star and is written by the finger of heroism upon every stripe of our nation's flag. These comrades suffered all the hardships of war. They drank from the filthy roadside pools as they marched through the swamps of death; they slept in the blankets of the blast, with sheets of sleet for covering, they breakfasted with danger, dined with death, and came back, those who did come back, with a laugh and a shout and a song of joy, true American soldiers, pride of their country, and envy of the world.

Their blood and their toil, their endurance and their patriotism, have made us, and all who come after us, forever their debtors. They left us, not merely a reunited country, but a country far greater because of its heritage in the deeds which left it reunited. Their lives teach us to strive after, not the thing which is merely pleasant, but the thing which it is our duty to do.

That peerless American, Theodore Roosevelt, urged us "to keep unstained the Honor Roll our fathers made in the war, to place our standard high, and to bear in mind, that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

The records in the Adjutant General's Office at Washington, show that in the War of the Rebellion, the enlisted men numbered 2,779,309 men. Of these 618,511 were 22 years of age and over. 1,151,483 were eighteen years of age and under. 104,987 were fifteen years of age and under, and twenty-six were ten years of age. You will recall the cry which startled the country when last year 18 years was set as the age for enlistment. Mothers rose in their might, protesting against the calling out of their babies, and still over a million boys were in the Civil War, 18 years of age and under.

The population of Illinois in 1860 was estimated to be 1,711,952. She furnished for the Union Army 259,092 soldiers.

Exclusive of General Grant twelve of the Major Generals of the Army belonged to Illinois. Let us name them: John Pope, John A. McClernand, Stephen A. Hurlbut, Benjamin M. Prentiss, John M. Palmer, Richard J. Oglesby, John A. Logan, John M. Schofield, Wesley Merritt, Benjamin H. Grierson, Giles A. Smith, and James Harrison Wilson.

Twenty of those who started out as commanders of regiments were promoted to Brevet Major Generalships. Fifty-three excluding those mentioned, rose to be Brigadier Generals and one hundred and twenty attained the rank of Brevet Brigadier General.

To this illustrious list should be added the names of the hundreds of thousands who served in the ranks, cheerfully followed these leaders through sunshine and shadow, who carried out every order given and who helped Illinois win her enviable position among the other states.

"Up close to the flag, my hero went down, in the salient front of the line, You may take for your heroes the men of renown, but the man with the musket is mine."

Hon. Clark E. Carr, in eulogizing the soldiers of Illinois said, "Lincoln, Grant and Logan. What other commonwealth can number among her immortals such great names. Had Illinois only given these three generals to the nation, she would have been distinguished as is no other commonwealth among the sisterhood of states. Yet were Lincoln, Grant and Logan not numbered among those sent forth from the prairies, there would still appear in the firmament of American glory a constellation of Illinois heroes that would illumine the world."

I have walked the aisles of magnificent cathedrals, have studied the walls where had been painted scenes of history. In stately Capitols of the Nations I have looked with admiration and interest upon the scenes historic which tell of the struggles and progress of its people. I have imagined my country a grand and holy temple walled by the shining horizon and canopied with the infinite blue. Upon every wall I have pictured wonderful scenes of History. Every wall the North, the

South, the East, the West, is glowing with the unfading splendor of some epoch-making event. On the wall of the West, in marvelous colors wrought, glows the event of America's discovery by Columbus and his hundred men. On the wall of the East is thrown the picture of the Landing of the Pilgrims, with millenium in their hearts and empires in their brains. On the South, is delineated with transcendent power the event of the American revolution, which secured a people's independence, and gave this nation birth. The wall of the mighty North is glorified with the masterpiece of History's charmed pencil. The War for the preservation of our National Union, which gave a race its liberty and proved with blood that a Government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth. Then over all can be seen the smiling and unclouded skies, frescoed in golden light with the promise and prophecy of everlasting peace.

In the midst of all this beauty I see the Stars and Stripes, the Banner of Freedom, the Banner of Humanity, the Banner of Peace. Up in the empyrean blue, kissed by the sun of day, and wooed by the stars of night, it proudly floats the emblem of liberty the hope of the world.

"O stripes of white and scarlet,  
O, blue fields with your silvery stars,  
May strong arms defend you,  
Willing feet follow you,  
Dying lips give you their blessing,  
Ours by inheritance, ours by affection  
Long may you wave in the free winds of heaven  
The emblem of liberty, the hope of the world."

O Liberty, thy torch was kindled at the sacred shrine, where God and man made compact when the years of Time were young, Its flame has been the beacon light for every serf and slave.

Thy voice has been the inspiration and the hope of millions  
dead and gone,

Thy shield has been the guiding star through all the nights of  
wrong.

Thy sword will match the splendor of the sun, when tyranny  
and bigotry and ruthless might are mouldering in their  
eternal graves.

Oh Liberty, I know not what invention may spring from the brain of the future, I know not what fabric of glory may be woven in the loom of the years to be, but I do know that springing from the infinite sea of the future, there will never come to these banks and shores of time, a greater blessing, a rarer gift, than liberty for man, for woman and for child, and liberty for man, for woman and for child was the purpose of these soldiers of Illinois."

At the Battle of Shiloh, 7,882 union soldiers were killed and wounded and of this number nearly 400 were from Illinois. To the honor of the State be it said, that within twenty-four hours after the battle was fought our first war governor, the grand old humanitarian, Richard Yates the First, chartered a steamboat and with surgeons, medical supplies and nurses was on his way to the scene of carnage. One week later he arrived and the dreadful havoc of war was plainly to be seen. Dead bodies awaiting burial, some in the ground but only partially covered. Hundreds were lying where they had fallen, their wounds still undressed, and hundreds were dying from disease induced by nervous prostration and exposure. Within a few hours the boat was filled with those most seriously wounded and started on its homeward way. Again and again the trip was made until more than one thousand wounded soldiers were brought to northern hospitals, within reach of their friends. "We must not let our brave boys suffer, they must not think they are forgotten, we must follow them wherever they go, and at whatever cost. They must have needed supplies and must receive their messages of love and encouragement from their homes." In this way, Governor Yates and Illinois maintained the morale of the Union army. Friends of the soldiers everywhere appreciated this effort, and from the east came to the Illinois Governor this message:

"Bear to the prairies of the west  
The echoes of our joys,  
The prayer that springs from every breast  
God bless you, Illinois."



The first battle in which any considerable number of Illinois troops were engaged was that of Belmont, Nov. 7, 1861, all troops excepting the 7th Iowa, were from Illinois.

At the battle of Fort Donelson, Feb. 16, 1862, nineteen of the thirty-six regiments were from Illinois. In the battle of Corinth, Oct. 3rd and 4th, 1862, ten out of the forty-four Infantry Regiments engaged were from Illinois and six of the Brigade Commanders wounded belonged to Illinois. At Perryville, Ky., Oct. 6th, 1862, were many Illinois regiments actively engaged and sustaining heavy losses. At the battle of Stone River, Dec. 31, 1862, to Jan. 2, 1863, General John M. Palmer was in command of a Division and out of one hundred and six volunteer regiments engaged, twenty-four were from Illinois, and from the seventeen regiments whose casualty lists were the largest, six were from Illinois.

At the two days' bloody conflict at Chickamauga, Sept. 19-20, 1863, Illinois was represented by two commanders of Divisions, Major General John M. Palmer, and Brigadier General James D. Morgan; seven Commanders of Brigades, and by twenty-eight Infantry regiments. Of the twenty regiments which met with the greatest loss, five were from Illinois. At the battle of Missionary Ridge, Nov. 26, 1863, General John M. Palmer commanded the Fourteenth Corps and of the thirty-eight Illinois regiments engaged, six of them were among the heaviest losers. The ninth Illinois Infantry lost more men killed in action than any other Illinois regiment. In less than fifty days they lost 577 men. The Eighth Illinois lost the heaviest of any Cavalry regiment of Illinois.

Thus in figures is recorded the deeds of some of our soldiers. But do not forget that in the ranks among the killed and wounded were boys whose names have not been singled out, but who served their country with equal courage, equal loyalty. They cemented the union of states with their privations and their blood. They finished what the soldiers of the Revolution commenced, by taking out the clay of human slavery, used in the foundation of this nation, and remixing a mortar in their own blood; they rebuilt this temple of liberty to abide for all generations, a land without a master, and without a slave. They wrote with their blood the only complete chart of Human Lib-

erty that up until that time was ever written. As Christ died to make men holy, they died to make men free. They ratified with their musket and swords the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln in his Emancipation Proclamation. They wrote their names on the battle's fiery fringe, traced their epitaph on the face of the universe, an indelible record of heroism upon the scroll of Time.

What more did they do? They struck the shackles from the limbs of stunted humanity and said, stand up, be men, and out of that mass of wavering mortals they builded a nation firm and solidly together. They gave to the world the greatest array of heroes the world has ever known. They gave Lincoln, the emancipator, the martyr, the man. A man whose life was so pure and exalted that when he died the angels scarce needed to stoop to lift him to the heaven above. They gave Grant, into whose heroic veins was poured all the leaden ore of Galena, making him a projectile from the battlements of heaven. Whose military strategy exploded ancient fallacies and introduced original ideas of Government. Whose message of "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer," stimulated the north to renewed vigor, and whose prophetic message, "Let us have Peace," was as a sacred benediction upon the hearts of his countrymen. Logan, of whom General Grant stated, he was the most eloquent speaker he had ever listened to, that if it had been necessary Logan could have, with his eloquence, inspired the men with whom he came in contact with such loyalty that to a man they would have remained in the army as long as an enemy assailed his country. His loyalty was shown in later days when at the head of his men, he led them to victory, and never was defeated, Palmer whose military record is second to none, always commanding the Illinois troops. General Grant has said that much of the success of Illinois must be accredited to that splendid gentleman and soldier, General John M. Palmer. Other distinguished commanders, well known to you and to all the people of Illinois were Oglesby, McClelland, Black, Wallace, Sexton, Dustin, Hurlbut, and hosts of others.

Pardon me if for one moment I digress from these memories and speak of the heroes of today. These boys of ours left

our shores and sailed over sea, to fight the same fight for liberty their fathers had fought. Do you not think the blood of the soldier of the sixties had much to do with the outpouring, the uprising of the soldiers of today? Do you not think, you mothers, when you kissed your boy goodbye and bade him uphold the principles his father had fought to establish, do you not think I say, that the lessons of the sixties found a resting place in the minds of the boys of 1918-1919?

Here, too, Illinois did her part, the third state in number of soldiers for humanity, her heroism the equal of any, she gave freely of her best. Those who sleep on Flanders fields where the poppies blow, died for a worthy cause, while others return to repeat the lesson o'er and o'er again. Hail, worthy sons of worthy sires, we drop a tear for those who did not return, and to those who are with us, we welcome you back to Illinois, proud that you have brought back to us the flag of your fathers, without a single stain. We salute you soldiers of today, and ask God's choicest blessing to rest upon you.

So to the keeping of Illinois we give this tablet. May it be an incentive to greater loyalty, greater heroism, and it must be an incentive to greater Americanism. Illinois may see the equal of her Union soldiers, she will never see their superior. Hold them close to your hearts for soon they will enter the Valley of the Shadow. Then "let us highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation under God, shall have a new birth of freedom,—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." \*Governor Yates, as the representative of the State, to your care and keeping we surrender this tablet; guard it well that Illinois may show to future generations that they know their heroes, they appreciate their services. "Lord God of Hosts be with us yet, lest we forget."

"By the fields thy sons left gory  
Make the past thy future story  
On and on to greater glory—  
Hail, Illinois."

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\*Hon. Richard Yates, Assistant Attorney General of Illinois, accepted the tablet on behalf of the State.